REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of the present application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested. In the final rejection of February 20, 2007, the Information Disclosure Statements/List of Related Cases filed July 25, 2005 and March 2, 2005 were objected to as not containing a blank space next to each document to be considered for initialing by the Examiner; Claims 1, 7 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Montfort et al.; Claims 1-7, 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Yoshikawa in view of Montfort et al.; and Claims 8, 10 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Yoshikawa in view of Montfort et al. and further in view of Kobayashi et al. New Claims 43-46 have been added and thus, Claims 1-13 and 43-46 remain active.

Considering first then the Examiner's objection to the Information Disclosure Statements/List of Related Cases filed July 25, 2005 and March 2, 2005, it is to be noted that a substitute List of Related Cases is submitted herewith which contains appropriate spaces next to each document to be considered for the Examiner's initials.

Considering next then the rejection of Claims 1, 7 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Montfort et al., it is to be noted that Claim 1 has now been amended so as to claim the fact that the blade member has a thickness of 50 to 2000 μm as appears in the last line of Claim 1. As discussed at page 42, lines 3-10 of the specification of the present application:

> "On the other hand, according to the present invention, the blade 21 alone cannot secure the pressing force since the blade 21 is a thin member to increase the efficiency of transmission vibration. Therefore, according to this embodiment, the vibration member 22 is configured to provide the blade with a pressing force to press the blade 21 against the image carrier." (Emphasis added).

The specification also discloses at page 40, lines 3-5;

> "The blade 21 may have a thickness of 50 to 2000 μm, preferably, 100 to 500 μm."

Montfort et al. neither discloses nor suggests that a cleaning blade 91, which the Examiner relies on as alleged disclosure of the blade member of the claimed inventions, has a thickness of 50 to 2000 μm. Accordingly, it is believed that Claims 1, 7 and 11 are allowable over Montfort et al. Claims 1-7, 9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshikawa in view of Montfort et al. As described above, Applicants' independent Claims 1, 10, 11 and 12 have been amended to clarify the patentable subject matter of the present invention over the combination of Yoshikawa and Montfort et al. Yoshikawa also neither discloses or suggests that a cleaning blade 3, which the Examiner relies on as alleged disclosure of the blade member of the claimed inventions, has a thickness of 50 to 2000 μm. Thus, neither Yoshikawa nor Montfort et al. discloses or suggests that "the blade member has a thickness of 50 to 2000 μm".

The criticality of the above-described range of the thickness of the blade member is disclosed on page 40, lines 5-15 as follows:

> "If the thickness of the blade 21 is too small, the undulation of the surface of the image carrier 11 and the blade 21 itself makes it difficult to secure (an amount of) pressure by which the blade 21 is pressed against the image carrier 11. If the thickness of the blade 21 is too large, the blade 21 absorbs vibrations from the vibration member 22, thus preventing the vibrations from being sufficiently transmitted to the end part of the blade 21. As a result, the toner cleaning characteristic is reduced."

Thus, unexpected superior results of improved toner cleaning performance arising from the above-described range of the thickness of the blade member are clearly demonstrated.

In view of the foregoing and in view of the criticality and superior results resulting from the above-described range of thicknesses of the blade member, and additionally in view

of the fact that neither Yoshikawa nor Montfort et al. teach or disclose Applicants' claimed invention, it is submitted that Claims 1-7, 9 and 11 also patentably define over the prior art. In this regard, it is noted that each of Claims 2-7, 9 and 11 contain additional limitations not taught by the prior art. In view of this and in view of the above-emphasized limitations now contained in each of Claims 1, 11 and 12 claiming that the blade member has a thickness of 50 to 2000 μm, it is submitted that each of such claims patentably defines over the prior art.

Lastly considering then the rejection of Claims 8, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Yoshikawa in view of Montfort et al. and Kobayashi et al., it is respectfully submitted that Kobayashi et al. fails to rectify the deficiencies noted hereinabove with regard to Yoshikawa and Montfort et al. In view of this and in view of the additional limitations set forth in Claims 8, 10 and 12 not shown by the prior art, it is submitted that Claims 8, 10 and 12 also merit indication of allowability.

In view of the foregoing, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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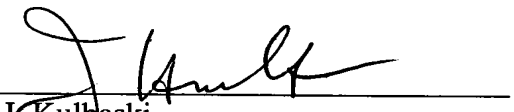

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	Docket No.: 251418US2	Serial No.: 10/817,249
LIST OF RELATED CASES CITED BY APPLICANT UNDER 37 CFR 1.56	Inventor: Tohru NAKANO, et al.	
	Filing Date: April 5, 2004	Group: 2852

SUBSTITUTE LIST OF RELATED CASES

Examiner Initial	Docket No.	Serial or Patent Number	Filing or Issue Date	Patent App. Publication No.	Inventor or Applicant
	251418US2*	10/817,249	04/05/04	2004/0197122	NAKANO, et al.
	271294US3	11/126,233	05/11/05		NARUSE, et al.
	263264US2	11/011,193	12/15/04		NAKAZATO, et al.

Examiner

Date Considered

*Present Application; listed for information

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